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3/26/03  
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#### GRASSFED LABELING:

We farm 150 acres, producing grass-fed (no grain) beef and lamb. We are founding board members of the Vermont Grass Farmers Association. We have one of the first federally approved labels for our grass fed (no grain) lamb summer sausage. Our farm is also an educational center.

The nutritional value of animal foods such as meat, milk, cheese and butter is powerfully affected by the degree to which an animal is grass fed. The nutritional value of ruminant animal foods rapidly declines with even small amounts of grain feeding. There is a significant and rapidly growing public awareness of the nutritional, environmental and social benefits of growing ruminant livestock without any grain. There is scientific research to support this, including very recent research and a large body of classical clinical work prior to 1940.

Grass-fed food products come from ruminants raised and finished entirely on forages with no grain. Any grain in the diet must be disclosed to the consumer.

The grass fed label must apply strictly and only to ruminants raised exclusively on pasture, hay and grass balage. No grain can be used under the grass-fed label.

If you water down this label, you undermine the meaning and value of the word grass-fed, and take away from the individual farm and consumer a clearly differentiated product. Once again, a creative grass roots initiative now changing our farming and eating behavior will be subverted by government intervention for the benefit of large financial interests.

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